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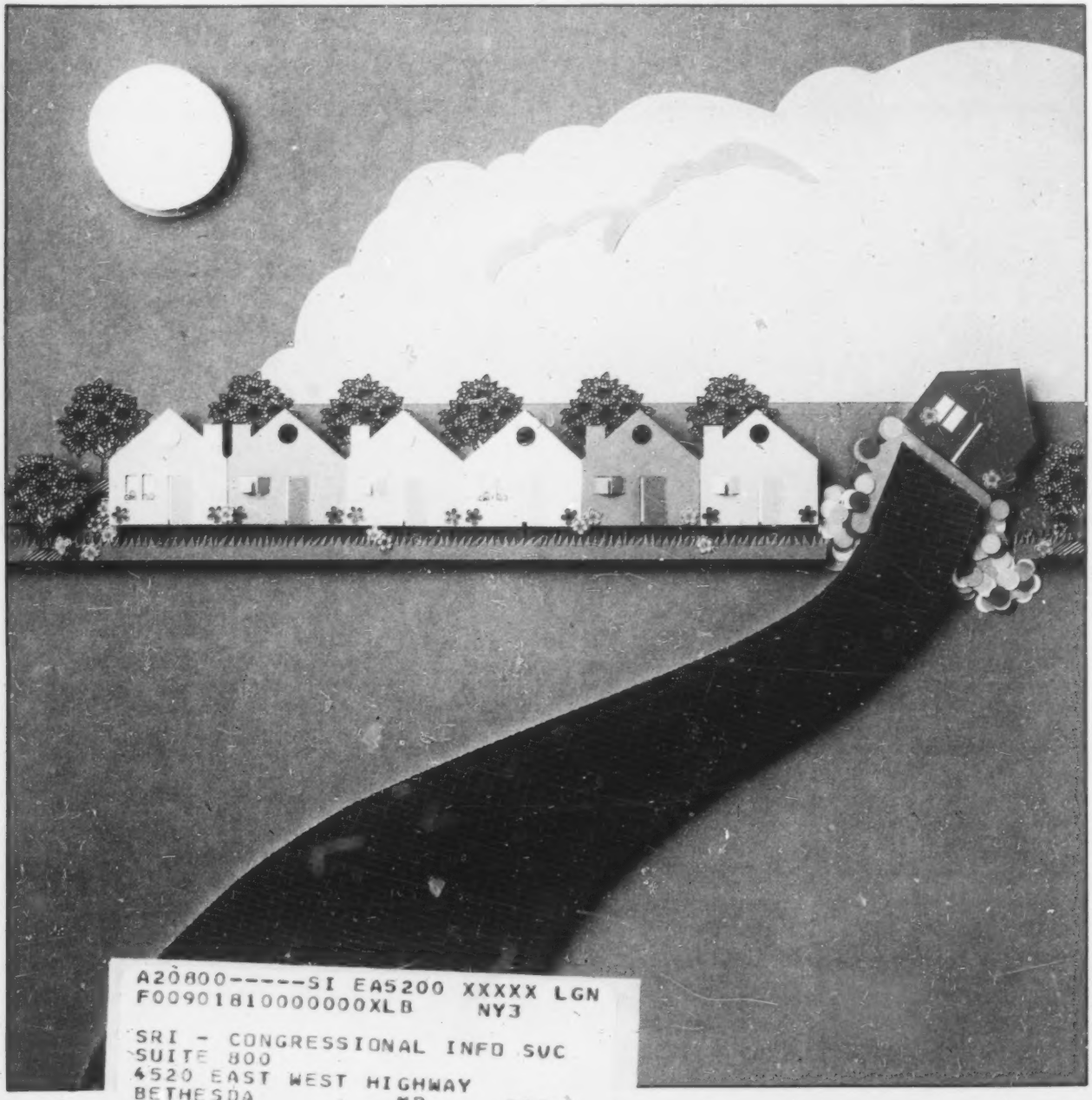
Lawn&Garden Marketing

MARCH 1988

An Intertec publication

Cover story: Household L&G spending up

Electric lawnmowers • Speaking of Power



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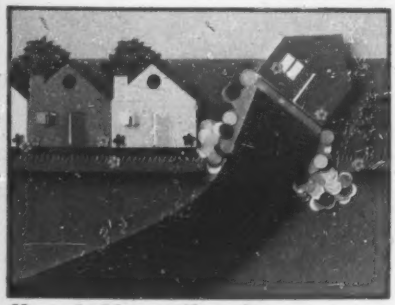
Lawn&Garden™ Marketing

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

MARCH 1988 VOL. 27, NO.3 PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY



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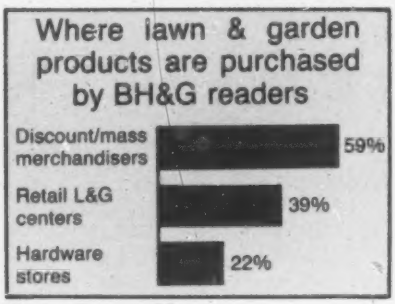

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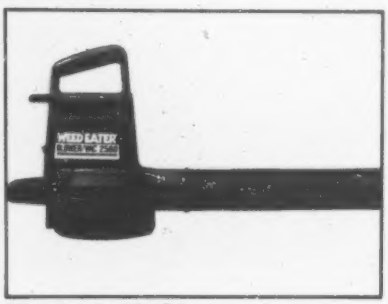

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Postmaster: Return form 3579 to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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From the Editor

What copycats they are; children mimic nearly every aspect of our daily lives. I have no doubt, for example, that because of my husband's and my interest in home improvement projects our children will grow up knowing how to repair things, how to renovate homes and how to landscape their yards. At five, our son already has gone through two sets of his own hand tools; he has his own miniature snow shovel and an imitation of Dad's self-propelled lawnmower (although his is a side-discharge and blows bubbles out the top). He even dressed up as a "handyman" for Halloween last year.

Toy marketers are brilliant promoters of this concept. They have long realized that children are imitators of adults, and they know exactly how to solicit children's interests to capture an adult's dollar. But children are not just imitators; they can be initiators as well. The toy people have a marketing strategy for this, too; it is perhaps best exemplified through the recent dinosaur rage. When I was a kid, dinosaurs were considered something only kids with pocket-protectors and thick glasses took an interest in. Today, children have an almost cult-like interest in the prehistoric creatures! Through brilliant marketing and promotional strategies, makers of dinosaur paraphernalia have been able to attract not only the attention of children, but the adult dollar as well: today, there are dinosaur sheets, wallpaper, posters, soap, books, pencils, place settings, blow-up toys, puzzles, computer software—the list is endless.

Of relevance here is that promoters have, in effect, obtained the interest of not just children, but parents, grandparents and teachers as well. Recently on a business trip to Washington, for example, I spent a couple of hours at the Smithsonian Institute's Museum of Natural History. I went to see the dinosaur exhibit because of my son's interest. The place was literally overflowing with school-age children who had gone to see the exhibit as well. The museum even encased a "DinoStore," where visitors could purchase souvenirs. (I bought a dinosaur stencil set, two pencils and a cup.)

Similarly, I think through a little effort and imagination, the lawn and garden industry could capture the attention of this young market. I think too many have overlooked this possibility, though the National Gardening Assn., Burlington, Vt., is one that has not. Through its Grow Lab program, sponsored by some industry majors, it has managed to find its way into school education programs and the interest has filtered into the children's homes as well. (See September 1987 *LGM*, page 22.)

On a smaller scale, retailers could promote the industry, while promoting their own products. Think about it. Why not with every X-brand snowshovel sold, give a child-size version free; with every X-brand rake, mower, trimmer, chainsaw, make the same offer. Why not encourage children to garden by donating seeds and peat pots to local elementaries (accompanied by take-home coupons for the parents). With a little imagination, the possibilities are endless. And the best byproduct of your effort is the potential involvement of a previously uninvolved parent. If we place too much emphasis on growing the market through the mature consumer only, we may not grow at all; we may miss out on a tremendous future opportunity.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn & Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING Vol. 27, No. 3 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913)888-4664. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Subscription information: Publication is mailed free in U.S. and Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying and merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year in the U.S./$30 in Canada and other countries. Foreign airmail optional at an additional $55 per year. Single copy price $2 plus postage and handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage and handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for change of address or for new subscription processing. Subscription correspondence should be sent to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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ISSN 0091-4665: $2.00. Article copies, 16mm microfilm, 35mm microfilm and 105mm microfiche are available through University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

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Household L&G spending up 20 percent

The annual National Gardening Survey shows consumer spending on lawn & garden increased by $3.2 billion in 1987. The study also described purchases by product category in more detail than ever before.

By Bruce Butterfield, *National Gardening Assn.*

Retail sales of lawn and garden products for 1987 totaled $17.4 billion, a 23 percent increase, or $3.2 billion over 1986 when consumers spent $14.2 billion, according to results of the 1987-88 National Gardening Survey conducted for the National Gardening Assn. by the Gallup Organization Inc. This is the second year that lawn and garden consumer sales have risen by more than $2 billion. In 1985, lawn and garden retail sales totaled $12 billion.

While the number of households participating in most types of lawn and garden activities stayed at about the same level from 1986 to 1987, the average amount of money consumers spent on most types of gardening activities increased significantly. Of the 15 categories of DIY lawn and garden activities measured in 1987, 14 had participation rates equal to that seen in 1986. However, the average amount of money consumers spent on each of these same lawn and garden activities in 1987 increased in 11 out of 15 categories.

The year 1987 also saw an increase in the average total that consumers spent for all lawn and garden activities. In 1987 consumers spent an average of $251, compared to $196 in 1986 and $159 in 1985.

An increase in total retail sales in 1987 was seen for lawn care, flower gardening, landscaping, indoor houseplants, flower bulbs, tree care, ornamental gardening, growing berries, shrub care, raising transplants and herb gardening. A decrease in total retail sales in 1987 was seen for vegetable gardening, insect control, container gardening and fruit trees.

The lawn and garden categories showing the most growth during 1987 over 1986 included ornamental gardening (perennials and roses), raising transplants, growing berries, tree care, indoor houseplants and landscaping. Above average growth in 1987 was also seen for lawn care and shrub care. And there was slightly lower, yet significant, growth rates in retail sales in 1987 for flower gardening, herb gardening and flower bulbs.

Who spent the most on lawn and garden during 1987? The key demographic groups for lawn and garden retail sales in 1987 included men (58 percent of sales), 30 to 49 year olds (49 percent of sales), college-educated households (56 percent of sales), professionals (30 percent of sales), business people (21 percent of sales) and households with manual labor occupations (27 percent of sales).

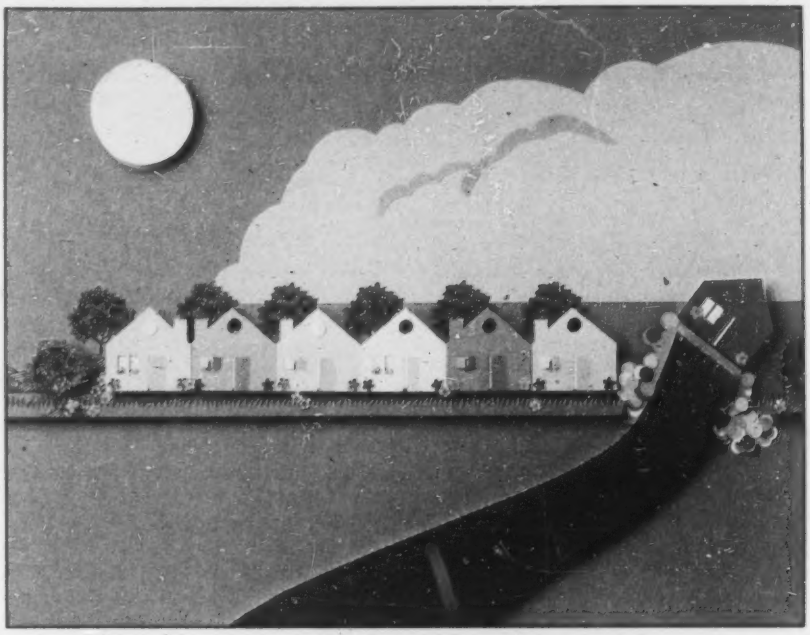
Other key demographic groups for lawn and garden retail sales last year were households with annual incomes of $40,000 and up (46 percent of sales) and rural households (32 percent of sales).

Regionally, 25 percent of lawn and garden sales in 1987 were in the East, with 6 percent in New England and 19 percent of sales in the Mid-Atlantic states. Twenty-three percent of lawn and garden sales were in the Midwest, with 14 percent in the East Central

Average $ spent per household

Activity	1986	1987	$ Change
Lawn care	$92	$113	+$21
Landscaping	145	183	+38
Flower gardening	41	49	+8
Vegetable gardening	41	45	+4
Tree care	61	89	+28
Indoor houseplants	27	36	+9
Shrub care	40	46	+6
Insect control	36	39	+3
Flower bulbs	26	25	−1
Fruit trees	38	29	−9
Raising transplants	18	30	+12
Ornamental gardening	46	91	+45
Growing berries	15	22	+7
Container gardening	34	33	−1
Herb gardening	10	10	0
TOTAL	$196	$251	+$55

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization



states and 9 percent in the West Central states. Twenty-nine percent of lawn and garden sales were in the South, with six percent in the Deep South and 19 percent in the rest of the South. And twenty-three percent of lawn and garden sales were in the West, with 6 percent in the Rocky Mountain states and 19 percent of sales in the Pacific states.

The new 1987-88 National Gardening Survey includes a much more detailed and in-depth look at the lawn and garden products that consumers purchased in 1987 than it has in previous years. In total, consumers were asked about which of more than 100 specific types of lawn and garden products they purchased. The table below summarizes the lawn and garden products purchased in 1987 by category. In total, 93 percent, or 65 million, of U.S. households involved in lawn and garden activities purchased one or more lawn and garden products in 1987.

Retail sales in 1987

Activity	1986 $ Bil.	1987 $ Bil.	Change $ Mil.	% Change
Lawn care	$4.317	$5.449	+$1.132	+26.2%
Landscaping	2.176	2.921	+.745	+34.2
Flower gardening	1.519	1.777	+.258	+16.9
Vegetable gardening	1.363	1.253	−.110	−8.0
Tree care	.845	1.253	+.408	+48.2
Indoor houseplants	.826	1.105	+.279	+33.7
Shrub care	.659	.840	+.181	+27.4
Insect control	.992	.979	−.013	−1.3
Flower bulbs	.431	.456	+.025	+5.8
Fruit trees	.382	.292	−.090	−23.5
Raising transplants	.131	.249	+.118	+90.0
Ornamental gardening	.166	.471	+.305	+183.7
Growing berries	.050	.095	+.045	+90.0
Container gardening	.310	.305	−.005	−1.6
Herb gardening	.039	.046	+.007	+17.9
TOTAL	$14.206	$17.491	+$3.285 billion	+23.1%

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization

Lawn and garden product	1987 Households purchasing %	MM
Nursery products	52	36
Indoor plants & supplies	50	35
Insect controls/chemicals	45	32
Fertilizer	45	32
Seeds	45	32
Pet/wild bird products	45	32
Watering equipment	39	27
Outdoor living/barbecue	38	26
Garden hand tools	37	26
Soil amendments/mulch	32	22
Power equipment	25	18
Food preservation	25	18
Plant containers/pots	14	10
Gardening information	13	9
Lawn/landscape services	9	6
None	7	5

Where did consumers purchase lawn and garden products in 1987? As the table at right indicates, Garden Center/Retail Nursery was the retail outlet where most consumers purchased lawn and garden products. Following Garden Center/Retail Nursery in terms of the households that purchased products at that retail outlet were Hardware Store, Mass-Merchandiser/Discount Store, Feed/Seed Store, Supermarket/Drug Store, Home Center and Mail-Order. —LGM

Lawn and garden retail outlet	1987 Households purchasing %	MM
Garden center/retail nursery	44	31
Hardware store	30	21
Mass merchandiser/ discount store	21	15
Feed/seed store	19	13
Supermarket/drug store	15	11
Home center	16	11
Mail order	8	6
Other	3	2

The 1987-88 National Gardening Survey, on which this article is based, provides detailed marketing information on the who, what, where, when and why of lawn and garden retail sales. Each year the National Gardening Assn. publishes the results of the Survey in a comprehensive 300 page report. For more information contact the NGA at 180 Flynn Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401; (802) 863-1308.

Green Scene

Better Homes and Gardens consumer panel reveals L&G preferences

A 1987-88 *Better Homes and Gardens* Consumer Panel survey of subscribers found that the majority of the respondents, 59 percent, purchase lawn and garden products at discount/mass-merchandiser stores such as K mart or Wal-Mart. About 39 percent shop at local retail lawn and garden centers, and 22 percent shop at hardware stores.

These results are from a survey of a specific segment of *BH&G* readers but are not necessarily typical of consumers as a whole. (See "Household L&G spending up 20 percent," page 4.) The demographic breakdown of the respondents revealed a median age of 43 years, which is in line with the national average of 44 years. The median household income of the respondents was $38,946, which was much higher than the national average of $28,421. Eighty-three percent of the respondents were married.

Forty-two percent of the respondents said they would purchase or have purchased lawn and garden items to give as Christmas presents, and 35 percent said these purchases had been planned. Five percent said such purchases had been impulsive, and 59 percent said it was a combination of both.

"Quality" ranked as the most important factor when shopping for such products, based on mean scores. Price followed as next important, then variety of product selection, advice on how to use the product and general gardening advice from the store.

More than half, 58 percent, usually read the gardening advice column in their local newspaper.

As for specific products, nearly 50 percent purchase fertilizers and plant foods at the same time and place in which they purchase plants, flowers, trees, etc. About 48 percent do not. Nearly 69 percent said they use a hose and sprinkler to water their lawns, about 19 percent use only a hose, 12.5 percent use a sprinkler system and about 5 percent have a hose and sprinkler with a timer.

In the survey, respondents were told to consider "lawn and garden products" as gloves, burlap barriers, garden/yard fencing, mulch, rakes, prunes, sprayers, spreaders, hand-held power tools, fertilizer, indoor plant-related items, nursery stock, patio items, pesticides, soil enhancers and watering products. Outdoor power equipment products were not included.

Where lawn & garden products are purchased by BH&G readers*
Discount/mass merchandisers
59%
Retail L&G centers
39%
Hardware stores
22%
*Based on respondents to Better Homes & Garden's Consumer Panel survey of subscribers. Multiple answers were chosen by some respondents.

GCA members told they could be held liable

Members of Garden Centers of America were warned that if they give erroneous information over the telephone to poison control centers they could be sued for malpractice, according to attorney John P. Manwell.

Manwell says GCA members should never try to identify a plant over the phone, and even when shown the actual plant, leaf or fruit, they should not give advice unless that they are confident their identification is absolutely correct. Members also should check with insurers about coverage on such a liability.

GCA has developed a "poison plants" kit to assist members in providing information on plant safety to customers. Members may receive the kit by calling GCA at (202) 789-2900.

True Temper wins POP award

True Temper, Shiremanstown, Pa., is a winner in the Point of Purchase Advertising Institute's Outstanding Merchandise Achievement awards. The company was presented with the award after competition that took place last November. More than 50 categories were entered by the 1,200 entrants, most of whom were the producers and suppliers who designed the promotions and displays.

True Temper's display was intended to set it apart from the normal clutter in the garden tool section at many stores. A silver background with black accent lines defines the display, and pre-punched holes are set for specific product hooks and racks. The header attaches to the pegboard with standard peg hooks.

Briefs

• Pennington Enterprises Inc., Madison, Ga., has purchased 10 acres in Lebanon, Ore., with the option of 20 more acres for future expansion. A Northwest seed production and packaging facility will be built on the land. The facility will have high-speed packaging capabilities and will blend and package seed. In other news at the company, Pennington has purchased an interest in Cactus Seed Inc., Roll, Ariz. Cactus Seed operates a bermuda grass seed processing plant.

• Stim-U-Plant, Columbus, Ohio, has appointed the following new sales representative firms: P.S.M. Inc., Glenview, Ill., serving Wisconsin and Illinois; SKU Marketing of Cincinnati, serving Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky; Missouri Sales Inc., of St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo., serving Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas.; and A.R. Strouth Manufacturers Representatives, Minneapolis, serving Minnesota.

• Aeroxon Products Inc., New Rochelle, N.Y., is changing its name to Roxide International Inc. The company says that the new name will better identify the company's diverse product line, although the Aeroxon name will continue to be used with the fly paper product on which the company was first founded to produce.

• Duraco Products Inc., Streamwood, Ill., has opened a 100,000-sq.-ft. warehouse at the company's headquarters. The new building doubles warehouse space for Duraco's Garden Scene® planterware.